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NEWS



MARCH 2024

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CLUBS & ORGANISATIONS (useful numbers)

If your club or organisation is not listed here and you would like to be included, then please let me know on 01787 210354 or email bronwenstacey@btinternet.com

Allotments Secretary - Vacant. Interim Contact	Jenny Cutts	01787 211371
Assington Baby and Toddler Group	Rev Tricia Box	07747 124592
Assington Books, Village Hall (see post office for times)	Michelle Bournier	07954 221773
Assington Farmshop	Maxine Gardiner	01787 211610
Assington Post Office, Village Hall	Mon 1.30-3.30,	Wed 9-12
Boxford CEVC Primary School (office@boxford.suffolk.sch.uk)	Head: Emma Lea	01787 210332
Brownies, Boxford	Moiria Grant	01787 211513
Church - Treasurer	Ian Clark	01787 211133
Churchwarden	Roger Britcher	01787 211021
Churchwarden	Bronwen Stacey	01787 210354
Community Choir	Nettie Osman	07957 394780
County Councillor (james.finch@suffolk.gov.uk)	James Finch	01473 264993
District Councillor (Assington)	Lee Parker	07970 196884
Doctors surgery – Sudbury	Hardwicke House	01787 370011
Doctors surgery – Bures	Bures	01787 227529
Footpath Wardens	Paul & Cynthia Hollingsworth	01787 211620
Horticultural Society	Karen Wiles	
Leavenheath Cinema	Marion	01206 263301
Member of Parliament (james.cartlidge.mp@parliament.uk)	James Cartlidge	020 7219 4875
Parish Council	Simon Thorogood	01787 227400
bronwenstacey@btinternet.com	Bronwen Stacey	01787 210354
david.wiles@live.co.uk	David Wiles	07811 108702
tony@howcroft.net	Tony Howcroft	
hwallace58@gmail.com	Helen Wallace	01787 211162
i.jordan741@btinternet.com	Ian Jordan	
andrewpeterhill@hotmail.com	Andrew Hill	01787 827112
Parish Council - Clerk (assingtonpc@yahoo.com)	Christine Hargan	01449 674727
Pub – The Shoulder of Mutton		01787 210334
Stoke by Nayland C of E Primary School (admin@sbn.suffolk.sch.uk)	Head: Mrs Kelly McGrath	01206 262418
Vicar (vicar@parishchurch.co.uk)	The Revd Daniel Whiffin	01787 228292
Village Hall – Bookings	Karen Wiles	07983 002072
Village Hall - Caretaker	Sean Mills	07547 190948
Village Hall - Charity Secretary (richelle.birchall@gmail.com)	Richelle Birchall	07973 220064
Womens Institute, Boxford (annie-phillips@hotmail.co.uk)	Annie Phillips	01787 211729

The Assington News is a community magazine funded primarily through adverts and donations, for which we are always most grateful.
ADVERTS. RATES pa : £20 for 1/8 size page advert, £35 for 1/4 page advert, £60 for 1/2 page advert, £120 for a full page advert.
Contact Bob Cowlin 01787 229955 Bank Account details for payments and donations: Account no: 01345159. Sort Code: 30 - 98 - 31.
 Please make cheques payable to the Assington Association.

The ASSINGTON NEWS NOW IN COLOUR ONLINE at <http://assington.onesuffolk.net/assington-news/>

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ASSINGTON HORTICULTURAL SHOW

**will be held on
SUNDAY 18 AUGUST 2024**

The show will be held on Sunday 18th August and plans are now afoot for this years show.

We do hope that you will all have a go and enter a few classes. Any profits will be donated to our local charities. Last years show raised £104.90 for The Assington News.

Entries were down with only twenty people entering classes.

Come on Assington we can do better than that. If you would like to help in the run up to the show or on the day an hour or two would be wonderful, please give me a call on 07983 002072. I'm off now to dust off the Canoe and make a start on my garden.

Karen x

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THE OLD WORKHOUSE CONTINUED Part 2

From Angela Bradding

The Old Workhouse was purpose-built to accommodate the poorest and most vulnerable Assington parishioners for 53 years (1784 – 1837). During this time hundreds of people would have come through its doors. There is, however, virtually no narrative of these lives or their experiences. This instalment aims to give some voice to the staff and the inmates who lived, and died, at our workhouse. We are unlikely to find any first-hand accounts of life at Assington Workhouse, but we strive to add some 'human colour' to the physical remains that we are preserving.

We begin by examining the existing structure of The Old Workhouse. For example, the governor's quarters, situated at the garden end of the building were better appointed than the spaces for the poor. The governor had rush bottomed armchairs (rather than simple stools that the inmates used), shelves, cupboards, candlesticks, a copper tea kettle, and a small fireplace on the first floor. The only other fire was in the large inglenook on the ground floor, the Wardroom. This large room contained 18 spinning wheels, two yarn reels and a loom. The Overseer's Books record cloth being sold. The able bodied would have been required to work on spinning and weaving to help with their keep.



We believe that up to 25 people slept on the first and second (garret) floors. Many of the timbers that formed the supports for the later cottages (after 1837) have rows of holes drilled in them; many can still be seen. We believe that they formed the side supports of the beds for the poor. Rope would have been strung between these side panels to provide support for straw mattresses.

Workhouse accounts show that one bed would have slept up to four people: either head to toe or in shifts. The Overseers' Books show sheets being laundered (in-house) and blankets being purchased. Males, females, and

children almost certainly slept together, which seems the norm in early rural workhouses. Later union workhouses enforced separations of families.

One of our most intriguing and enigmatic finds was one small Lancashire clog. It seems too small to have been used for a child, although we know that items such as shoes and blankets were given as poor relief. We wonder whether the clog had been an apprentice piece, as there is some

evidence that young boys were schooled in shoe making. Or it may have been used in the workhouse to ward off evil spirits; this practice was quite common in the 18th century where shoes were left near fireplaces and entry points. Our clog was just lying in an upstairs garret room, so we do not know where it had been previously.

Reading and writing were not the norm for rural communities such as Assington. Even the first Governor, Ambrose Wright in 1784, was illiterate. He drew a cross on his contract, which was noted as *"the mark of Ambrose Wright"*. Although we have found names of Governors, Overseers and Church Officials from the Overseer's Books, tracing the names and biographical detail of inmates is more difficult. A useful source is so called Removal Orders (to and from Assington). From the 17th century provision for the poor included the stipulation that a particular parish was responsible for its own poor citizens. Therefore, if a person, or family, sought poor relief in a parish other than their own they were removed to their parish of origin. These documents provide some names and biographical detail, albeit incomplete. For example, sometimes only the husband's name was given - *"Nathaniel King and his wife"*; *"William Barford and his wife and child, 1-month old son William"*. Sometimes marital status was listed - *"Mary Ransom, singlewoman [sic]"*; *"Susan Randall, widow"*. Many entries either omitted or approximated children's ages. - *"Ann Death (wife of James Death) and Ann their infant daughter"*; *"James and Sarah Pilgrim and child Mary aged about 6 weeks"*; *"Wallor Lee and his daughter Mary aged upwards of 8 years"*; *"Robert and Elizabeth Robertson and children, Robert, William, Lucy, Mary, and George"*. Occasionally we glean some insight into jobs that people did - *"William (labourer) and Elizabeth Rule"*; *"John and Jane Crissel and Johnathan their child of about 18th months. John is a private soldier in the East Essex Regiment of the Militia"*.

The Parish Council were responsible for ensuring that the Workhouse provided their poor with the essentials for survival. As well as the roof over their heads and somewhere to sleep, the Parish paid for laundry, *"washing"* and *"shaving (of elderly men)"*, *"haircuts for girls"*, maintenance of items such as *"brooms, boilers, coppers, kettles"*, and coffins when the need arose (we have preserved the coffin hatch on the garret floor). Providing food and drink for the residents was perhaps the most important aspect of responsibility. Workhouse meals are portrayed as simple but sustaining. They mainly consisted of gruel, 'thin' meat stew, and bread and cheese. Assington's Overseer's records show purchases of whole pigs and cuts of pork, meat (type unspecified), butter, and cheese. The 1808 inventory lists *"16 wood trenchers"* (plates), *"kneading trough"* for baking bread (we have the remains of a bread oven), *"three pork tubs"*, a *"meat keeler"* and *"six beer casks"*. Beer was brewed in-house as hops were delivered. This was called small beer, which was weak, and drunk in preference to water from the well just behind the Workhouse. Additional beer was also bought in. We have found no mention of milk delivery although milk was recommended for brewing weak tea for

children, pregnant women and the very sick. It is possible that the Workhouse had a cow or goat/s as preventing fresh milk from going sour was virtually impossible. Similarly, there is no mention of sugar being delivered, or anything resembling a sweet treat. Sugar was an expensive and 'exotic' ingredient only available to the rich. Interestingly, some tobacco was occasionally purchased, although we don't know who smoked it.

So, we hope that you have enjoyed our glimpses into the past. Any insights or comments that you may have would be gratefully received.



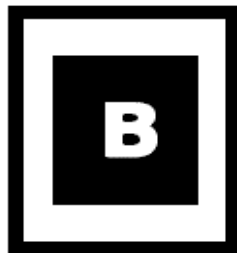
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NATURE WATCH

Whilst out cycling near Edwardstone an unfamiliar bird flew out in front of me and, restricted by high hedges, continued to fly just in front of me for about two hundred yards. It then went up into a low tree where I was able to observe it further before it realised it was under scrutiny and disappeared off across fields.

On my return home I looked up what it was and discovered it was a Hobby. According to the reference book, "This is a small falcon that winters in Africa, south of the Sahara, returning to the heathland and farmland of southern England in April."

If that were the case, I think this one may have arrived earlier on the recent winds from the Sahara ; the late-January early-February southerlies which have provided our mild weather.

However, further research reveals:

"Relatively scarce and secretive when breeding, the Hobby is a difficult bird to census. A few thousand pairs are thought to breed here, with the population restricted to the southern half of Britain and exhibiting greatest abundance in the south-east.

Hobbies are our only bird of prey that feed regularly on large insects, which it catches in flight with its feet. Dragonflies are its favourite food, but it will also take birds (- no!! - often fast flying birds such as swallows and swifts!) which it catches in mid-air.



It has long scythe like wings, dark blue-grey above with some chestnut underneath. It was clearly a fast and agile bird, but must have been recovering from its long journey for me to be able to keep up.

Hobbies nest in old nests of crows and other birds. The tree selected is most often one in a hedge or on the extreme edge of a spinney, from where the bird can observe intruders from a considerable distance.



Another unusual sighting was a Hornet that I disturbed whilst turning the compost heaps. Despite their reputation, this was docile enough for me to move to safety and continue with my gardening.

The fearsome-looking hornet may not be a well-loved insect, but it is actually much less aggressive than the common wasp. It is also an important pollinator and a predator of species that feed on plants and crops, so can be a gardener's friend.



The hornet is a large social wasp that has a brown thorax and brown and yellow stripes on its body, rather than black and yellow. It has an obvious 'waist' between the thorax and abdomen.

The similar-looking Asian hornet has recently arrived

in the UK, but has a mainly brown abdomen except for one yellow segment. It is smaller than our native hornet. *It is a notifiable insect.*



From JEFF STACEY

ASSINGTON RAINFALL AND TEMPERATURES

Bill Milner (rainfall)

and Bob Cowlin (temperatures)

HISTORY annual rainfall :

2016	599.5	2017	571
2018	559	2019	597
2020	636	2021	582.3
2022	419	2023	662

	mm	max	min
2019			
OCT	90	18 °C	-2°C
NOV	69.5	12 °C	-5°C
DEC	78	10 °C	-5°C

	mm	max	min
2020			
JAN	33.5	10 C	-5°C
FEB	56	11°C	-3°C
MAR	21	14°C	-5°C
APR	22	23°C	-1°C
MAY	5.5	27°C	-2.5°C
JUNE	50	28°C	+2°C
JULY	58	30°C	6°C
AUG	109	32°C	4°C
SEP	25.5	27°C	5°C
OCT	110	14°C	2°C
NOV	33	14°C	-4°C
DEC	102.5	10°C	-5°C

	mm	max	min
2021			
JAN	89	10°C	-5.5°C
FEB	34	14°C	-7°C
MAR	26	20°C	-3°C
APR	1	15°C	-5°C
MAY	78.1	25°C	-2.5°C
JUNE	55.2	30°C	+3°C
JULY	72	28°C	7°C
AUG	29	24°C	5°C
SEP	28.5	27°C	3°C
OCT	74.5	18°C	1°C
NOV	27	13°C	-3°C
DEC	68	12°C	-6°C

	mm	max	min
2022			
JAN	7	12°C	-6.5°C
FEB	46	13°C	-4°C
MAR	29	18°C	-2°C
APR	9.5	22°C	-6°C
MAY	37	25°C	0°C
JUNE	33.5	30°C	2°C
JULY	5	36.5°C	6°C
AUG	11.5	32°C	7°C
SEPT	25	25°C	1°C
OCT	63	18°C	0°C
NOV	107.5	14°C	-2°C
DEC	45	10°C	-9.5°C

	mm	max	min
2023			
JAN	41	10°C	-7.5°C
FEB	3	14°C	-7°C
MAR	78	15°C	-6.5°C
APRIL	65	18°C	-2°C
MAY	19	22°C	1°C
JUNE	15.5	30.5°C	6°C
JULY	72.5	28°C	8°C
AUG	65	29°C	4°C
SEP	41.5	30.5°C	5°C
OCT	137	23°C	-2 °C
NOV	61.5	11°C	-7°C
DEC	63	11°C	-3°C

	mm	max	min
2024			
JAN	47	9°C	-7°C

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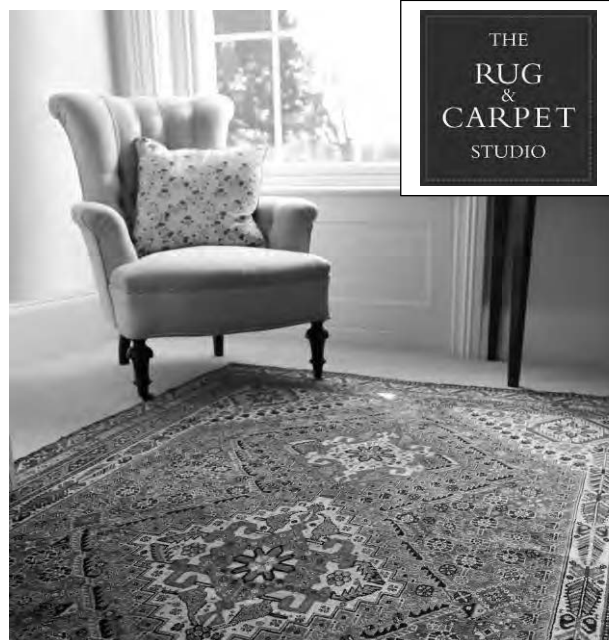
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PARISH CHURCH NEWS



<https://assingtonchurch.org.uk>

*Letter from the
Rev Daniel Whiffin, Vicar of
Bures with Assington and
Little Cornard*



Dear friends

By the time you read this, I expect the delight of spring will have started to come alive. I am writing on the last day of January, though, just having spotted snowdrops heralding the hope of the new life to come. I can't wait! What causes those spring flowers we love to bloom? Apparently the process is all triggered by a single plant protein named CONSTANS. This protein "turns on" as the number of daylight hours increases.

There's a famous vision in the Bible book by the prophet Ezekiel, set in a valley full of dry bones. At the time, all the dreams of God's people seemed to be dead. Was it all lost forever? Or was life dormant as in winter, with hope of everything coming alive again? Ezekiel is given hope in the vision as the dry bones come alive. The bones come together, tendons and flesh appear on them, and then life is breathed into them.

But what is the trigger? What causes the dead to come alive? It all begins when God tells Ezekiel to 'prophesy to these bones and say to them, "Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord!"' This comes up again and again in the Bible: God's message—ultimately the good news of Jesus' coming alive—brings new life where there was death. It triggers beauty to bloom where winter seemed like it would never end.

Perhaps you wonder what it would be like to come alive? Why not join us for Hope Explored, beginning on Tuesday 23 April?

I hope you have a joyful Easter
Daniel



MARCH 2024 SERVICES IN ASSINGTON

**10th March @ 10.30am MOTHERING SUNDAY
MORNING WORSHIP**

**24th March @ 10.30am PALM SUNDAY
HOLY COMMUNION**

**31st March @ 10.30 EASTER DAY
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THE REV. DR. BANHAM

Following a recent enquiry which I received, regarding an erstwhile Vicar of Assington, the Rev. Dr HENRY FRENCH BANHAM, I was interested to find out more during my research, and thought that I would share this local history. The Rev Dr Banham was the Vicar of Assington from 1901 until his death in 1932, aged 86.



Unfortunately I haven't been able to find out any details of Henry Banham's early life; he only goes into print from his days as a student at Cambridge University.

The following details appeared in the 1932 edition of "The Eagle", volume 209, a magazine supported by members of St John's College, (Cambridge), in an obituary to him:

"The Reverend Dr Henry French Banham matriculated at Sidney Sussex College in 1866, but migrated to St John's. He graduated as a junior optime in the Mathematical Tripos and

took a third class in the Natural Sciences Tripos of 1869. He then took up medicine, training at St Thomas's Hospital, and graduated M.B. in 1874 and M.D. in 1881. He was physician to the Royal Berkshire Hospital, lecturer in medicine at the Sheffield Medical School, and honorary consulting physician to the Sheffield General Infirmary. At the age of 45 he was ordained by the Bishop of London to a curacy at St Peter's, Islington, and in 1894 was appointed vicar of Tuddenham St Martin, Suffolk.

In 1901 he became vicar of Assington, and in 1923 was appointed rural dean of Sudbury. He died at Assington Vicarage, Suffolk, on 18 May 1932, aged 86."

In earlier editions of The Assington News, a series of excerpts from a private autobiography of a former resident appeared, entitled :

"EXCERPTS FROM A PRIVATE AUTOBIOGRAPHY of MAJOR HENRY O TOMKINS (1894 - ?1980).

Henry had lived in the village of Assington as a child between about 1895 and 1908, when he joined the army at the age of 14. Among the many anecdotes of Assington Life at that time appeared the following :

"The vicar was Dr H Banham, and if ever there was a Christian Gentleman, he was it.

I believe he was comparatively wealthy and was the kindest man I have ever known. The Church was packed every Sunday morning and evening. In the summer time we all had to attend both main services as well as Sunday School. In fact, Sunday was quite a gala day. More often than not, Dad would attend both services, In the morning, he would be togged out in his morning coat and top hat, and in the evening in a lounge suit. All the elite of the village wore top hats. We had our own pew which was fourth from the pulpit. The folk from the Hall had their pews in the Chancel and any strangers who came in would have to stand, unless some of the regulars were absent. What a pity there are no more like Dr Banham. His wonderful personality gained him the respect of everyone and they all showed it by their attendance at Church."

My further research uncovered the following account from a 1902 edition of the **Suffolk Institute, Volume XI Part 2**. This account gives a potted history of our local church and 'Big House' , as it was thought/believed (?inaccurately?) at the time of delivery:

"ASSINGTON CHURCH AND THE HALL.

The West Suffolk party had the pleasure on the return journey of a visit to Assington Church and Hall. Sir Brampton Gurdon, President of the Institute, regretted that he had to return to London, but he requested Rev. Dr. Banham to show the party the Church and the Hall; and he left some interesting notes for the assistance of the guide.

The church was visited first.

A church was said to have been built here after the battle between the Saxons and the Danes in 1010, by King Canute, and a religious establishment was raised on the site of the present hall to perform masses for the souls of heroes. The present church was erected late in the 14th or early in the 15th century. The chancel fell down in 1827, and was entirely rebuilt. Two of the monuments Were so much injured that it was impossible to restore them. The present monuments comprise one in the Chancel to Robert. Gurdon (died 1577) and his wife, Rosa Sexton, of Lavenham; and John Gurdon (died 1623) and his wife; Amy Brampton, of Letton in Norfolk. Under these were the smaller figures, representing Robert's son, John, and his daughter, Elizabeth, who married Thomas



Waldegrave, of Bures, her portrait being over the chimney-piece in the dining-room at the hall.

The children, represented under John's Monument were his son, Brampton (to whom there was a monument in the aisle), and his daughter, Elizabeth, who died unmarried at Blickling Hall, Norfolk, where there is a monument in the church erected to her by Sir Edward Clare. The monument in Assington was raised in obedience to the will of John Gurdon. In the south aisle there is a monument to Brampton. Gurdon (M.P. for Sudbury), who is placed between his two wives. He died in 1648(-9). One wife was Elizabeth Barrett, 'the ancestors of the Gurdons of Suffolk, and the other Muriel Sedley, ancestors of the Gurdons of Norfolk. The coats of arms at the sides represent the sons and son-in-laws, nearly all regicides. Next to this is a simple mural tablet to John Gurdon (died 1679). He was M.P. for Ipswich and Suffolk, and a member of the Council of State. In his time the property was forfeited, which accounted for the humility of his monument. The monument to his elder son, Robert, who Married a daughter of Lord Lysk and died 1683, was destroyed by the fall of the chancel. The church was "restored" about 40 or 50 years ago, when many interesting points were destroyed. Apparently from records in the British Museum, there was formerly some good stained glass here, and Sir Brampton Gurdon wrote that there must be some gravestones inside the rails of the chancel. The tower was rebuilt, almost an exact copy of the original.

Before the church was quitted Dr. Banham referred to the gravestones of Rev. and Mrs. Walker. In connection with Mr. Walker was related a pathetic and interesting piece of history. He endeavoured to dissuade one of the Gurdons from going to London to sign the death warrant of King Charles. Gurdon at first was not to be moved. So earnest was the pious incumbent, his appeal having failed, that on the morning when Gurdon was to drive to London, he laid 'himself across the path over which the coach would pass, and said, "If you go, you shall drive over my body." This so touched Gurdon that his journey was abandoned, and his signature was not on the death warrant.

The party next proceeded to the hall. On entering they were shown the five pardons four from King Charles II and one from James II., from which the hall and a small part of the estate were restored: At the opposite end of the room was seen the mantel-piece (with armorial bearings) from the old dining-room. The present house is supposed to be the back part of a quadrangle, which was gradually pulled down to suit the reduced estate. The old stables were in front of the house, where the cedar trees now stand. These were planted by Philip Gurdon about 1770. Over the dining-room door was a portrait of Robert Gurdon (in tilting armour) who died in 1577. Over the door opposite the front door, were the portraits of John Gurdon and Amy Brampton.

A large handsome picture, a copy of a Van Dyck, of Sir Nathaniel Bacon, of Stiffkey Hall in Norfolk, a relation of the family, was pointed out. Over the chimney-piece, in the dining-room, is a portrait of Elizabeth Waldegrave, née Gurdon. There were also pictures of Brampton Gurdon, who died 1648 - 9 and one of a head of a monk by Van Dyck. This picture had belonged to Sir Joshua Reynolds, and Sir Thomas Lawrence. Then there was 'Edmund Dyer,' by Sir Joshua Reynolds, painted for Edmund Burke. Near-by, Queen Elizabeth's 'Lord Essex', and 'Anne Boleyn', a relative of the family.

In the drawing room were seen some fine pictures. The best, Sir Brampton considered, was a little Teniere, representing the "Sense of Smell"; others were by Berghem and Van Goyen, and there was "Haddon

Hall" by Crossich, Sir Brampton counting these among his best art treasures.

There was, it was stated, a monastery here up to 1310. The present house was probably built not very long after this time, but of course has been several times altered; the large oak beams may be of the 14th century. It seems to have been thoroughly changed and the old windows destroyed about the beginning of the 18th century; some of these contained armorial glass.

The porch, minarets, and turret at the back, were added between 1820 and '1830, when the front was faced with brick, it being really a timber house.

The registers date back to 1598. The Dyers, the Mumfords, and the Weymarkes are old names of residents.

In 1681, "Mrs. An Gurdon," and in 1862 "Mrs. Brampton Gurdon" are both entered as "buried in lining" (linen).

After thanks to Dr. Banham and Sir Brampton for their kindness, the return journey was completed, Sudbury being reached just before seven o'clock."

The picture at the head of this article of the Reverend Dr Banham has been taken from the wonderful photograph below, of a local Assington event of some description, which necessitated being judged, as two of the un-named people are merely called "Judge". The other local personnel are as follows:

STANDING, from left to right:

Mr Bullen, (Gardener at Assington Hall).

Mr John Bell

Mr M I Meekings

Colonel Burton (Conservative MP)

Mr Alfred Peck

Dr Banham (Vicar of Assington)

Judge

Mr W Marshall

Mr George Rice

SEATED, from left to right:

Mr Fisher Marshall

Mr Arthur Hammond (Gardener, Assington Vicarage ie Glebe House)

Judge




Peter Robb

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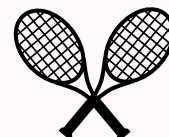
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ASSINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Matters of Interest discussed during a meeting held at Assington village Hall on Monday 29 January 2024

Present: Councillors Simon Thorogood, Andrew Hill, Ian Jordan, Bronwen Stacey, Helen Wallace

In attendance: CCllr James Finch, DCllr Lee Parker, Christine Hargan (Clerk) there were no members of the public present

Apologies for absence

Cllrs Tony Howcroft and David Wiles

■ **To receive declarations of interests and requests for dispensation** from Councillors :
There were None

■ **To agree Minutes** of Assington Parish Council meetings held on 3rd January 2024 and 27th November 2023, the minutes of 3rd January were amended to read object both sets of minutes were then resolved correct and signed by the Chairman

■ **County and District Councillor reports and public forum**

★ **CCllr Finch updated his SCC report on the following:**

- 10 year commitment to improve roads
- The Government committed the County Council to increased costs of £5.4 Million due to increase in living wage, but have provided no funding to cover it. Due to the deficit and high proportion of costs going to adult services and SEND there will be cuts to Arts and museums budgets. Councillors enquired what other budgets may be cut – CCllr Finch stated there were no plans to cut Libraries or transport budgets.
- Bid for buses - Chambers will now stop in the middle of Assington village.
- Adult Care services have been rated good by the Care Commission.
- Trading Standards are particularly active at Felixstowe Port.
- Rendlesham archaeological dig has uncovered some amazing finds to rival Sutton Hoo.
- National Grid all Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex County Councils continue to object and are pursuing information made available in the original plan. NG did not disclose that their shareholding company in America which has developed cables with three times the capacity of the existing ones and therefore could avoid the need for new pylons by simply restringing existing with new cable. The local MP says that NG are looking seriously at offshoring ahead of the Norwich to Tilbury project.

★ **Cllr Parker presented his BDC Report**

- 128 new council homes acquired across the two district councils, 42 in BDC; this is net of the 60 homes lost via right to buy.
- Warm spaces £21k grants have been made across BDC district.
- Second homes and empty properties to be brought back into use; there are 600 empty properties across the district, the council plans to resolve this by doubling council tax for empty properties, if they remain empty for over a year. Grants are available to bring the homes back to standard for the housing market. The difference between second homes and empty homes was defined as, in effect, second homes are furnished and used.
- BDC is encouraging developers to join the "Considerate Constructors" scheme, first rural council to create this scheme which may form a condition in future planning applications, the cost of membership will be borne by the developer.

• Cabinet will press ahead with a community engagement process re parking charges in BDC. The budget deficit is increasing to £1.8m. The income from parking will offset the business rates that BDC pay to the government for the car parks. There is pressure on Sudbury Town Council to take over their town's car parks. Councillors reiterated the view that in past consultations the public have been clear in their preference to pay for parking through council taxes, not parking charges, and that Babergh should respect this. Imposition of short stay (<1hr) charges would particularly damage communities and the towns.

■ **Planning:**

○ **Planning applications:**

There were none to consider

○ **Planning issues**

• **DC/21/02579 Assington Autos** The application will be heard by Committee; the process will involve a site visit followed by a hearing - date to be confirmed. There will be up to 3 speakers for the application; an objector, Assington PC and the applicant who will each have 3 minutes. DCllr Parker confirmed that the visit will include all relevant areas to the application.

○ **Status of planning applications**

• Acknowledged

• Cllr Parker commented that Parishes are not always interpreting their Neighbourhood plan in the same manner as the Planners.

■ **Finance**

• Receive the RFO report

- Reconciliation of accounts against budget : acknowledged
- Resolved to authorise payments to be made as per the schedule
- Transfer of funds and closure of Barclay accounts has taken place but since then there is a further interest payment into the deposit account. Cllrs are unable to authorise payment therefore Clerk has drafted a letter to Barclays Bank requesting them to transfer the funds to the new Unity Trust Bank unanimously agreed.

■ **CIL expenditure**

• Cllr Wiles has requested a grant to enable a shed to be purchased which would be used as a food bank at the Village Hall **resolved** to fund the £180 requested for the shed from CIL monies, but also to suggest that a larger unit might be needed.

■ **Update on National Grid Bramford to Twinstead reinforcement**

The Planning Inspectorate's examination of the proposed scheme is now nearing its end, and the Council believe that everything possible has been done to draw attention to local concerns. Since the last meeting, however, a potential new cable technology has come to light, which could theoretically remove the need for the new pylon line altogether. Given National Grid's statutory obligation to evaluate all options to find the best value for money for the bill payer - which has been the applicant's consistent refrain when presented with alternatives to reduce the impact of the scheme - failure to do this would risk undermining the validity of the application. The Council is working to publicise this development with all the relevant stakeholders.

■ **Questions to the Chair**

• The Clerk was asked to write to Simon White the previous auditor thanking him for his services.

■ **Date of the next meeting** 25th March to be held in the Village Hall at 7.30pm, preceded by the Annual Parish Meeting at 7pm.

■ The meeting closed at 9.20pm



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Thursday 2 May at 8.4am



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A VIEW FROM AROUND THE BEND

Had best Christmas ever, Bobbie drove us up, in her strange little car to somewhere on Norfolk Coast to her parents house, which was on top of some wild cliff tops near a place called Huntstan I think. Her parents were lovely and were very kind and made a great fuss of me and seemed pleased that she was happy and blossoming as they put it. They spoke in very strange tones that I couldn't get the hang of, kept talking about some bun in the oven and nudging each other. I did look at their oven which apart from some black bits that fell off the turkey was completely empty and just needed a good clean.

Bobby blushed when I asked her about it and said that they were listening out for the patter of tiny feet, so I guess that whatever was in the oven had made its escape, hope it wasn't a rat or some other vermin. Or worse still fell into the seasonal gravy. Least said the better I think.

Anyhow we spent a whole 3 days up there and we all got on well I think, although I got the impression that Bobbie had not always been their favorite daughter, even though she is their only child, ummm. Came home to Assington along the coastal road, very beautiful but biting cold and so windy.

Bobbie had to go straight back to work then and some night shifts as well which are exhausting but she seems very happy as she likes looking after the older folk it seems. Only problem for me is that she demands that I follow the same pattern which is not easy for me as I get very itchy in bed, if you know what I mean, no maybe not. Never used to be like that. To keep me busy and my mind off other things, I have been given a long list of home jobs to do, although I have to be quiet when she sleeps during the day, so as not to disturb her, once she it tucked in that is.

On the day shifts I have been working in the garden and digging out the old ditch at the back of the old cottage and the boggy bit as well that knowitall up the road says was once an old pond. Found an old bedstead, a china sink complete with brass taps (could be useful in guest room) bits of an old bike and many many old bones, how strange. Why would anyone put them all in a pond. What a waste of such good stuff and food as well. Still none as queer as folk I guess.

Still looking for work as it is nice to have a bit of spare cash, the pension is just not enough to even pay the bills now, everything is so expensive and getting more with each month, it is a blessing that I now have another regular wage coming into the house, although I make sure that Bobbie only pays just a little rent, because she contributes well and is useful in other ways.

Would be good to get out of the house and away from the village as well on a couple of days each week as well, if anyone needs help in the garden or mowing or decorating then just leave a message under the stone inside the side gate and I will gladly come along. Cant drive any more since my army days but happy to try anything else within reason. Maybe will ask the lady vicars, they are always helpful and like me a little I think.

Longing for spring to come and for the old village to come alive and bloom again into vibrant colours, I intend to put some hanging baskets out on the streetside of the cottage this year and set a good example to others, also to grow more stuff to eat to keep the bills down.

Still angry that I let myself down at the village show and be beaten for the largest marrow, so gloves off this year and will be planting soon into the very stinkiest muck with some black mud from the new pond. Should be good newtrians in all that with some cabbage water as well. Hope it is to be held again this year, revenge will be sweet. Not that I am that competitive or anything, just like to win.

Take care everyone and if her up the road allows and I am spared, I hope to travel around the bend again next month. All Wellwishes

Yours, Esra.

SESAW NEWS

Last month's Great Garden Birdwatch found Sparrows and Blue Tits ranked high in Suffolk and Essex, as they did in the SESAW garden. Since being temporarily housebound after a thyroid op, I've grown quite partial to ornithology. Gazing through a window in a cosy room on a winter's day has a certain appeal for a middle aged moggie but don't tell Kenneth, I'd never live it down.

An unprecedented number of rescue cats arrived for rehoming last year. Some were abandoned, some made homeless through their owner's circumstances, many were mothers with young families, some in-kitten with a second litter. We have wonderful volunteers who care for the animals but, like most charities, we struggle to find enough helpers. Currently, we particularly need reliable, conscientious adults to look after the cats on Saturdays. We often have youngsters for a while at weekends until academic commitments draw them away. 'Grown ups' who work during the week want time with their families at weekends and so we fall between two stools. We just need a few good people who could spare a Saturday (or Sunday morning) to feed, clean out and socialise our felines awaiting new homes. If you could help, please email sesawken@gmail.com or phone 07881 785535 for more information.

I must go now as there is activity around the nest box, suggesting months of entertainment ahead for me, Ollie (the Black) Cat.

Suffolk & Essex Small Animal Welfare, Registered Charity No.1124029, Stoke Road, Leavenheath, CO6 4PP. Tel: 01787 210888 www.sesaw.co.uk



BOXFORD "SCHOOL REPORT"

Sports at Boxford Primary School

We are racing through 2024. There have been lots of exciting events relating to our school curriculum, particularly the extra sporting enrichments all pupils are provided. Mr Griffith, our P.E leader, has organised many exciting events and we thank him for coordinating these. Boxford Primary currently hold the **GOLD** mark for **School Games**.

Here are some highlights from recent sporting events...

Netball: In a tightly contested netball match between Boxford and Dedham, both teams showcased exceptional skills, with impressive netball techniques on display. Dedham exhibited formidable defensive prowess, matching Boxford's strong defensive abilities. The match unfolded with end-to-end action, though occasional bunching and moments of players standing still added an interesting dynamic. Despite the closely fought battle, Boxford emerged victorious winning 6-4!

Swimming: Last month, Boxford took part in a swimming tournament at Hadleigh Pool; 10 schools were invited. Children from Year 5 and 6 took part in individual events, front crawl, back stroke and breast stroke. Boxford did really well winning some individual races, and came a brilliant third out of all ten schools. Thank you must be given to Vertas for organizing the event.

Athletics: Children from Year 4, 5 and 6 took part in an athletics tournament at Thomas Gainsborough High school in February. There were various events including a six lap paarlauf (pair run), 4 x 1 relay, 2 x 2 relay, track events included, soft javelin, standing vertical jump, chest push and speed bounce. The children loved the events and they look forward to more in the future.

Would you like a school tour?

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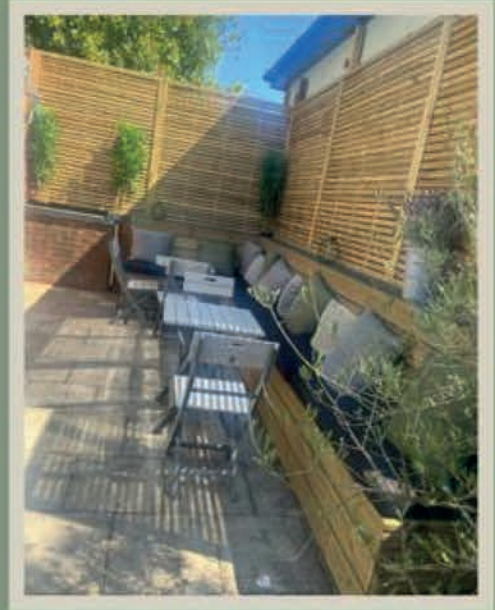


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